

Reflection on Daping trip 3th – 7th April 2015

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I have been given a chance to volunteer in Daping project in early April. The project was challenging but meaningful to me. Some obstacles blocked my way in the journey, but I managed to overcome and learn from them.

The challenge came before we arrived at our destination. We spent a lot of time on transportation, which might be the most tiring part in the whole trip. The road to Daping was very bumpy and uneven, which tired out us. Nevertheless, it tortuously revealed the hard-hitting condition faced by the students in Daping. They had to walk through the rutted road if they want to go outside their village. Compared with their obstructions, mine was not worth mentioning. This thought also made myself to focus on the future work.

After several hours of travelling by bus, we immediately formed four teams and carried out the works separately. I was responsible for planning the land surveying, which aimed to facilitate the design and construction of a new building there. At the very beginning, we were uncertain how to start our work on site because of lack of experience. Thanks to the support of our supervisors, Professor Tham and Dr. Wong, we figured out our direction to initiate our work. However, we still missed some minor information carelessly due to lack of communication. For instance, one of our teams expected another team to measure the width of corridor of the school, while that team believed that was not included in their scope of work. Although the mistake was minor and could be retrieved by estimation, it was avoidable with a thorough plan and tight communication among the groups, which were kept in my mind after the visit.

Besides, recording aerial video was another job for me in the trip. I had to fly a quadcopter and record a video in mid-air. It not only provided reference information for drawing map, but also helped introduce this place to others. Before joining this project, I practised controlling the quadcopter several times, and even crashed it once. At that moment, I was depressed and in despair due to my carelessness and immature skill. But

soon after this, I revived my spirit and learnt a lesson from the fault with a helping hand from Dr. Wong. In the end, the flight in Daping was successful. I felt like a flying bird when seeing the view of quadcopter from the screen. The campus at the top of mountain was captured together with the surrounding beautiful scene in high quality. The local students were excited and tried to follow when seeing an actual flying quadcopter. Their ingenuous reaction and smiling faces reminded me of the happiness towards some state-of-the-art gadgets when I was young. I hoped that the video can raise others' awareness of this remote impoverished region.

Visiting Daping was an amazing experience for me. Apart from the challenging tasks, I had an opportunity to interact with local villagers in Daping and experience their culture. I can't wait to join the next trip and see how the learning environment of students can be improved.